

**CHARTER**  
for the  
**NORTHWEST AREA COMMITTEE**  
***OIL SPILL EARLY ACTION TASK FORCE***

Co-Convened by the  
**WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT of ECOLOGY**  
and  
**UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

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**MISSION**

As a result of the Dalco Passage spill on October 14, 2004, Governor Gary Locke and RADM Jeffrey Garrett of the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) have requested that an Oil Spill Early Action Task Force be established under the auspices of the Region Ten Regional Response Team (RRT) and Northwest Area Committee (NWAC). The Task Force will evaluate actions to be taken during the early stages of oil spills when meteorological conditions are adverse. The Task Force will prepare a report with recommendations to improve early notification procedures, response policies, and response technology, including recommended changes to the Northwest Area Contingency Plan (NWACP). Action on the recommendations will improve the preparedness of the NWAC to respond during the first 12 hours of a spill, particularly during night, fog, and other adverse conditions.

**PROCESS**

The Task Force will meet during November and December 2004. An independent professional facilitator will be hired to ensure that the evaluation is impartial, a preliminary draft report is completed by December 15, 2004, and the final report is completed by January 5, 2005. The consultant will also facilitate the meetings and ensure all perspectives are respected.

Because of the short timeframe for the evaluation, the Task Force will rely on readily available information that focuses on early response actions taken under adverse conditions, including:

- Recent incidents, including the December 2003 Foss Spill and the Dalco Passage Spill.
- Reviews of internal and external incident “debriefs” completed by participating organizations.
- The Northwest Area Contingency Plan.

Upon conclusion of the evaluation process, the final report will be forwarded with recommendations to the RRT/NWAC for consideration and possible action. A copy of the report will be forwarded from the RRT/NWAC to the Washington State Governor and RADM 13<sup>th</sup> Coast Guard District.

## MEMBERSHIP

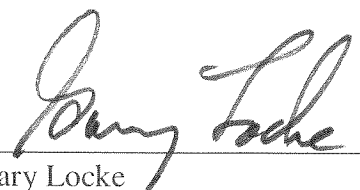
The Task Force will consist of representatives from:

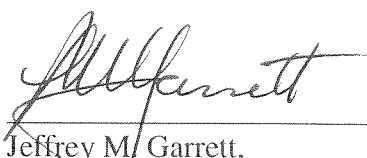
- People for Puget Sound
- Vashon-Maury Island Community Council
- Clallam County
- King County
- Makah Tribe in coordination with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
- Puget Sound Council
- Washington Public Ports
- Island Oil Spill Association
- Pacific Merchant Shipping Association
- Clean Sound Oil Spill Response Cooperative
- Marine Spill Response Corporation
- Western States Petroleum Association
- Washington Department of Ecology
- U.S. Coast Guard

Appropriate federal and state agencies from within the RRT/NWAC will actively participate in the process by attending meetings and supplying information, including the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Idaho Bureau of Hazardous Materials, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Public comment periods will be provided at each meeting.

## STAFFING AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Task Force will be co-convened by the Washington Department of Ecology and the U.S. Coast Guard, and supported by the independent facilitator, spill response experts, and staff from participating agencies. The Washington Department of Ecology will contract for the facilitator and technical experts.

 11-5-04  
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Date  
Gary Locke  
Governor  
State Of Washington

 2 Nov 2004  
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Date  
Jeffrey M. Garrett,  
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard  
Thirteenth Coast Guard District